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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

24 October 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Allan Evans (OIR)
 Colonel H. J. Lemley, Jr., USA (G-2)
 Captain B. E. Wiggin, USN (ONI)
 Colonel Willis B. Sawyer, USAF (AFOIN-2B2)
 Colonel John E. Leary, USA (JIG)

SUBJECT : TERMS OF REFERENCE: NIE 30-4-55: THE OUTLOOK FOR US
 INTERESTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

1. The attached terms of reference have been prepared by the Board in response to the action of the IAC at its meeting on 18 October.

2. This estimate is designed to provide intelligence support for the review of the basic Middle East policy paper by the NSC and must therefore be approved by the IAC by 22 November.

3. In view of the tight deadline, we propose omitting a meeting on the terms of reference. All agencies are invited to contribute to any section within their competence to do so as well as to additional matters which they feel should be covered in the estimate.

4. Our proposed schedule is:

Agency Contributions to O/NE	31 October
Board Draft to Agencies	10 November
Agencies Meet	16 November
IAC Approval	22 November

STAT

WILLIAM O. WEBB
 Acting Deputy Assistant Director
 National Estimates

Distribution "B"

DOCUMENT NO. 2
 NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐
☐ DECLASSIFIED
 CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS (S)C 1991
 NEXT REVIEW DATE:
 AUTH: HR 70-2
 DATE: 8 Jun 81 REVIEWER: 006514

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24 October 1955

SUBJECT: TERMS OF REFERENCE: NIE 30-4-55: THE OUTLOOK FOR US
INTERESTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

THE PROBLEM

To estimate: the outlook for US interests in the Middle East, the implications of Soviet policies in the area, the probable consequences of possible US courses of action in dealing with the situation.

SCOPE

This estimate is specifically designed to support an early Planning Board review of overall US policy in the Middle East (NSC 5428 and possibly related policy papers). The estimate will have three principal objectives: (a) to provide, as briefly as possible,

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an orderly analysis and projection of the main elements of the extremely complex situation confronting us in the Middle East; (b) to identify the major problems which are likely to confront the US in the next year or two; and (c) to estimate the consequences of various possible US courses of action. The estimate will be directly concerned with the area comprising the Arab states, Israel and Iran, although it will bring in Turkey, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, as well as interested major powers, insofar as they are involved with regional matters. The estimate will incorporate relevant portions of SNIE 30-3-55. The principal points to be covered are outlined below. In view of the broad character of the estimate, contributors are not restricted to these points.

I. What are the main elements of the situation now confronting the US in the Middle East and what is their interrelationship?

A. What is the present situation regarding such matters as regional defense, Western base and oil interests, inter-Arab relations (including position of Syria vis-a-vis Iraq and Egypt), the Arab-Israeli problem (including the status of the Johnston Plan), positions of other Western powers and of the UN, and US relationships with the various states of the area?

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B. What have been the objectives and impact of recent Bloc moves on the regional situation?

II. What are the probable trends over the next year or two and what specific problems or opportunities are they likely to raise for the US? In particular, what are probable Soviet aims and capabilities for exploiting the situation? How and to what extent are developments inside the region likely to depend on or affect developments in the overall international situation?

III. What are the probable consequences of possible US courses of action, singly or in combination? Inter alia:

A. What would be the impact within and outside the area of (1) greatly increased US support for the "northern tier" including additional military aid, direct participation and encouragement of participation by additional states; (2) some increased support; (3) continuation of a "go slow" policy; and (4) greatly lessened support?

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- B. What would be the effect of (1) greatly increased US economic or military aid offers to Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and other potential targets of Soviet offers; (2) continuation of present limited aid programs; (3) application of economic or other pressures; and (4) a decision to "write off" Egypt and others accepting major Soviet aid?
- C. What are the capabilities and intentions of Iraq or Turkey to gain dominant influence in Syria with or without US blessing? What would be the effect within and outside the area of such Iraqi or Turkish moves?

IV. How is the general Middle East situation likely to be affected by possible developments in Arab-Israeli affairs?

- A. What would be the political and military consequences of further major Israeli raids or of more ambitious military operations against Egypt or other Arab states: (1) in the face of a US restatement of its determination to maintain the peace; (2) in the absence of such a US move? What would be the consequences of more aggressive Arab behavior?

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- B. What are the prospects for the Johnston Plan and what would be the effects of its acceptance by the states concerned? What other prospects are there for improvement of Arab-Israeli relations and how would the general Middle East situation be affected?
- C. What would be the international effects of greater US support and security guarantees to Israel? Of US arms aid?

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